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THE WHITE HOUSE

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND HIS HIGHNESS PRINCE SOUVANNA PHOUMA, PRIME MINISTER OF THE ROYAL KINGDOM OF LAOS

His Highness Prince Souvanna Phouma, Prime Minister of the Royal Kingdom of Laos, departed Washington yesterday after a four day official visit to Washington. During the visit he conferred with the President, the Secretary of State and other United States officials on the future of Laos under the new Geneva agreements and upon the future of United States-Lao relations.

Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma and the President welcomed the international concord which resulted in conclusion of the Geneva settlement and opened up a new era for Laos. They expressed the mutual determination of their two governments to meet the obligations imposed on them by the agreements and thereby to contribute to the maintenance of peace in Southeast Asia.

The Prime Minister spoke of his determination to maintain and perfect the independence, unity and neutrality of his country. He also was particularly appreciative of United States efforts in helping to achieve the peaceful settlement. In discussing the future of Laos, the Prime Minister stressed that the prosperity and well being of the people of Laos depended upon full observance of the Geneva Agreements by all signatories and upon the unity of purpose of the Lao people.

The President confirmed the determination of the United States to work actively in supporting the independence and neutrality of Laos. He confirmed the willingness of the United States to offer in accordance with the spirit of the Declaration of Neutrality made by the Royal Government of Laos on July 9, 1962, its moral and material support to the Lao people toward achieving their aspirations with dignity and freedom through adherence to the stated course of strict neutrality.

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